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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/787,192	02/27/2004	Nobuyoshi Kakigi	03560.002242.2	4588
5514	7590	07/14/2004	EXAMINER	
FITZPATRICK CELLA HARPER & SCINTO 30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA NEW YORK, NY 10112			DEUBLE, MARK A	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3651		

DATE MAILED: 07/14/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/787,192	KAKIGI, NOBUYOSHI	
	Examiner Mark A. Deuble	Art Unit 3651	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**.                    2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
  1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/755,171.
  3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2/27/04.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 14-20, and 22-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamashita et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,139,254).

Yamashita et al. shows an image forming apparatus 10 which forms an image on a sheet and discharges the sheet to a stacking unit 60. The apparatus comprises a control means formed by sheet storing unit control processor 103, a host computer 110, and a selecting means formed by sheet reversing unit control processor 102. Images are formed on sheets based on image data from the host computer before the sheets are discharged to one of a plurality of stacking units.

Based on an input setting in the host computer 110, the selecting means causes the image forming apparatus to operate in one of a first mode in which sheets are discharged to the stacking unit in an image formed face-up condition and a second mode in which sheets are discharged to the stacking unit in an image formed face down condition (col. 4, ln. 47-68). After the first or second mode is selected by a user, the control means would execute a control step making different an amount of sheets stacked in the stacking unit in the first mode and the second mode under some circumstances because the control means automatically alters the height limit of a sheet stack in accordance with the size of the sheets used. Specifically, if the apparatus were used to feed large sheets in the first mode, and small sheets in the second mode, the control

means would automatically reduce the stacking capacity of the stacking unit when the apparatus switched from the first to the second mode of operation. Accordingly, when the apparatus is operated in the first mode, the control means would inhibit the discharge of a sheet to the stacking unit when the stacking unit reached a first stacking amount detected by a sensor corresponding to the large sheet capacity. When the apparatus is operated in the second mode, the control means would not inhibit the discharge of a sheet to the stacking unit when the stacking unit reached the first stacking amount, but instead it would only inhibit the discharge of a sheet to the stacking unit when the stacking unit reached a second greater stacking amount corresponding to small sheet capacity.

In regard to the limitation of claim 17, that the image forming apparatus forms the image based on an image data from an external apparatus via a predetermined interface, it should be noted that while the host computer 110 is a part of the overall apparatus illustrated, it may none the less be considered to be an apparatus that is external to the image forming apparatus 10 which inputs image date via a predetermined interface when this language is given its broadest reasonable interpretation.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashita et al.

Art Unit: 3651

In regard to the limitation of claim 21 that the control step uses data from a counter adapted to count a number of discharged sheets, it should be noted that it is well known in the art to count sheets in order to control a stack height rather than to detect a stack height as in Yamashita et al. and therefore the use of a counter is deemed to have been an obvious design choice absent some disclosure in the applicant's specification of some unusual advantage or result. *In re Kuhle*, 188 USPQ 7 (CCPA 1975).

### *Conclusion*

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark A. Deuble whose telephone number is (703) 305-9734. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday except for alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christopher P Ellis can be reached on (703) 308-2560. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

md



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